



CITY OF HAYWARD
AGENDA REPORT

AGENDA DATE 02/08/05

AGENDA ITEM 3

WORK SESSION ITEM

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Fire Chief

SUBJECT: Designating Fire Stations as Safe Havens for Abandoned Infants

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council adopt the attached resolution authorizing City fire stations as designated locations for surrendering infants.

BACKGROUND:

The Safely Surrendered Baby Law (also known as the Safe Haven or Newborn Abandonment Law) went into effect January 1, 2001 and authorizes the Alameda County Board of Supervisors to designate locations where newborns (less than 72 hours) may be confidentially surrendered, by a parent or guardian having lawful custody of the infant, without fear of criminal prosecution. The use of fire stations as drop off locations for newborns is part of a statewide effort to end tragic consequences of infant abandonment.

Until now, County protocol only allowed for Safe Haven surrender at Hospital Emergency Departments. However, in light of recent tragedies involving abandoned infants the Alameda County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution on January 25, 2005, which approves all Alameda County Fire Stations as California Safe Havens. It is now up to each City within the County to pass a local resolution authorizing the Fire Stations within the individual City to become a designated location for surrendering newborns.

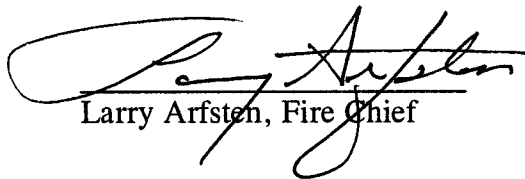
The Alameda County Social Services Agency in conjunction with the Alameda County Fire Chiefs Association and Senator Perata's staff have been working collaboratively to identify and coordinate the implementation of the program county-wide. This included development of standardized procedures, public education materials and outreach. The Alameda County Fire Chiefs Association has developed a guideline that outlines the steps to be taken by fire personnel at the stations when a newborn is surrendered to them. The County Social Services Agency will provide the city the newborn safe surrender kits, and coordinate with city public information staff in developing a public awareness and media campaign. They will also provide the appropriate standardized signage for the fire stations and in the event that the crew is out of the station, will post an alternate phone number or drop off location.

Once the Safe Haven program is adopted and fully operational, infants will be able to be left with fire personnel at any fire station in the City. These infants will be assessed and transported to the appropriate receiving facility where custody will be transferred to appropriate hospital personnel. A medical questionnaire and information about the program will be provided to the surrendering guardian. The City's responsibility will be to accept the child, provide any necessary medical intervention and arrange for immediate transfer to the appropriate hospital, providing the responsible surrendering person with the newborn medical questionnaire, fact sheet and coded wrist bracelet.

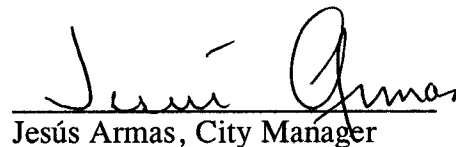
The fiscal impact of the proposal is negligible, as the Safe Surrender kits and signage are given to the City by the County. There will be a small training/familiarization component that can be completed through the normal fire department training schedule.

It is recommended that the City Council adopt the resolution establishing the Fire Stations within the City as approved locations where newborns can be dropped off.

Prepared by:


Larry Arfsten, Fire Chief

Approved by:


Jesús Armas, City Manager

Attachment: Draft Resolution

DRAFT

HAYWARD CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO. _____

Introduced by Council Member _____

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF HAYWARD
TO PARTICIPATE IN THE SAFE HAVEN PROGRAM FOR
NEWBORNS**

WHEREAS, the State Legislature has enacted Health and Safety Code § 1255.7 which allows any person having lawful custody of a minor child 62 hours old or younger to surrender physical custody of the child to an employee at a location designated by the Board of Supervisors; and

WHEREAS, the Hayward Fire Department is desirous of having its Fire Station Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 so designated; and

WHEREAS, such designation is for the benefit of children and the community because it will proved a safe haven to newborns who are 72 hours old or younger.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Hayward as follow:

Section 1. That Fire Station Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 of the Hayward Fire Department may be designated by Alameda County as locations which may accept newborns who are 72 hour old or younger from a person who has lawful custody of the child.

Section 2. The City Manager is authorized to request that the Board of Supervisors for Alameda County designate the Hayward Fire Station Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 in the City of Hayward as locations, which may accept newborns who are 72 hours old or younger from a person who has lawful custody of the child.

Section 3. The City Manager is authorized and directed to execute any documents which are necessary to effectuate this designation and which are consistent with this Resolution.

Section 4. That the City Clerk shall certify to the passage and adoption of this resolution; shall cause th same to be entered among the original resolutions of said City; and shall make a minute of the passage and adoption thereof in the records of the proceedings of the City Council of said City in the minutes of the meeting at which the same is passed and adopted.

IN COUNCIL, HAYWARD, CALIFORNIA _____, 2005

ADOPTED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS:

NOES: COUNCIL MEMBERS:

ABSTAIN: COUNCIL MEMBERS:

ABSENT: COUNCIL MEMBERS:

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk of the City of Hayward

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

City Attorney of the City of Hayward